

Sri Krishna Kathamrita



Bindu

Issue 593

The Chaitanya Math in Cuttack, Odisha





Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

Issue No. 593

Śrī Āmalakī-vrata Ekādaśī

10 March 2025

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GAURA IS A HIDDEN INCARNATION



His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

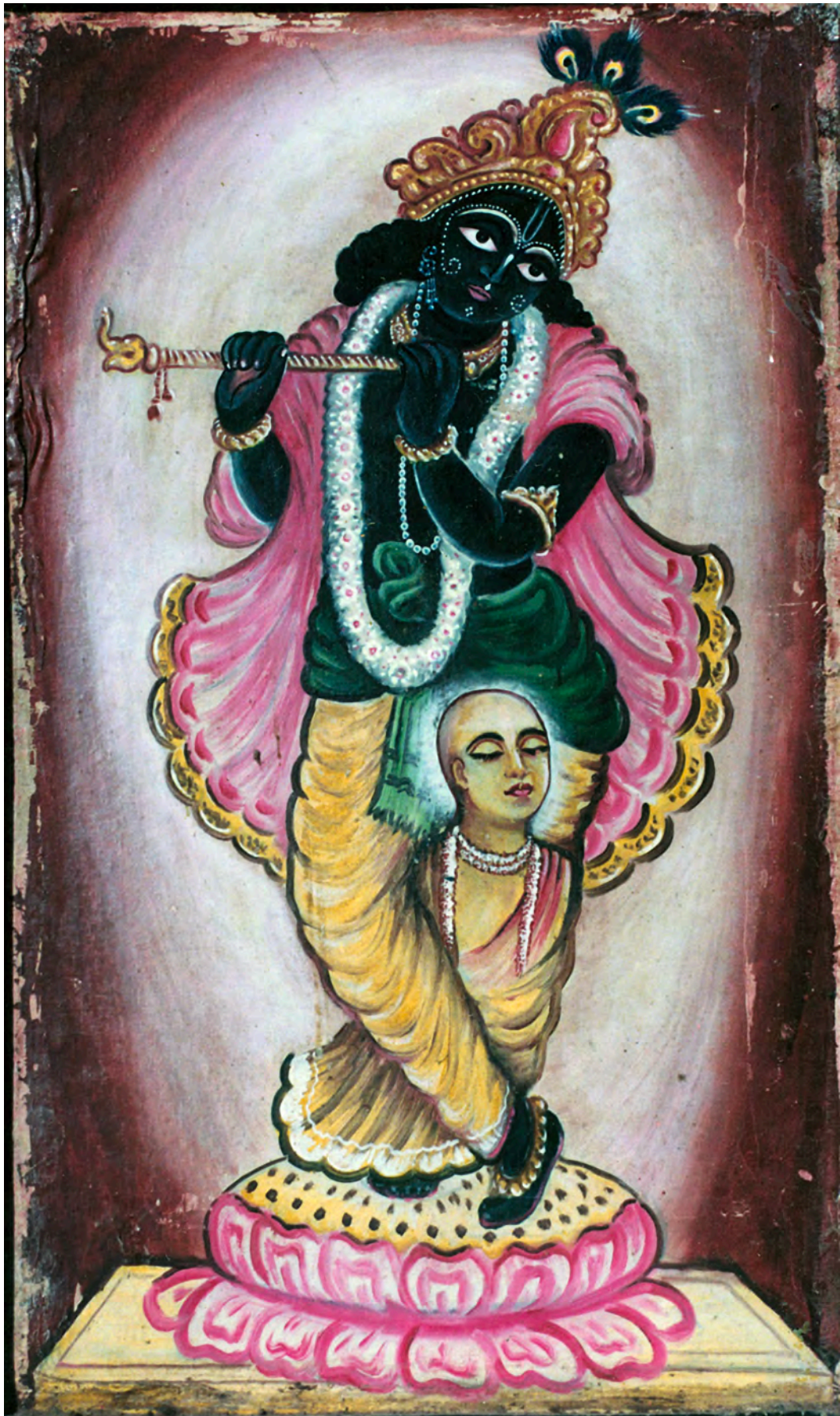
The Lord is addressed in this verse as *tri-yuga*, or one who appears in three millenniums — namely the *Satya*, *Dvāpara* and *Tretā yugas*. He is not mentioned as appearing in the fourth millennium, or *Kali-yuga*. It is described in Vedic literature that in *Kali-yuga* he comes as *channa-avatāra*, or an incarnation, but he does not appear as a manifest incarnation. In the other *yugas*, however, the Lord is a manifest incarnation, and therefore he is addressed as *tri-yuga*, or the Lord who appears in three *yugas*.

Sridhar Swami describes *tri-yuga* as follows: *yuga* means “couple,” and *tri* means “three.” The Lord is manifested as three couples by his six opulences, or three couples of opulences. In that way he can be addressed as *tri-yuga*. The Lord is the personality of religious principles. In three millenniums, religious principles are protected by three kinds of spiritual culture,



Unknown photographer.

Cover: Gauranga Mahaprabhu after taking *sannyāsa*. Contemporary painting by B. L. S. Shree Radha Art, Odisha.



Unknown artist. From Haridas Thakur's samadhi in Jagannath Puri.

Gaura-Krishna



Gaura-kīrtana

namely austerity, cleanliness and mercy. The Lord is called *tri-yuga* in that way also. In the age of Kali these three requisites to spiritual culture are almost absent, but the Lord is so kind that in spite of Kali-yuga's being devoid of these three spiritual qualities, he comes and protects the people of this age in his covered incarnation as Lord Chaitanya. Lord Chaitanya is called "covered" because although he is Krishna himself, he presents himself as a devotee of Krishna, not directly Krishna. 🍌

— Purport to *Bhāg.* 3.16.22

FIRST WORSHIP GAURA



Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

First chant the name of Gauranga. By his mercy there will be *anartha-nivṛtti* [elimination of impediments in the heart]. Then there is the possibility of *artha-pravṛtti* [accumulation of positive spiritual assets]. If one does not obey Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, both his worship of Radharani and his claims to be a *mañjarī* are false.

A *sādhaka* still infested with *anarthas* should worship Gaura; when free from *anarthas* he may

worship Krishna. While yet unfit due to *anarthas*, anyone who deceptively attempts to approach Krishna will be slain by Krishna's Vishnu aspect, as were Agha, Baka, and Putana. 🍌

— Bhakti Vikasa Swami. *Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava*. Volume 3, part 3.12. Bhakti Vikasa Trust. Surat, India. 2009.

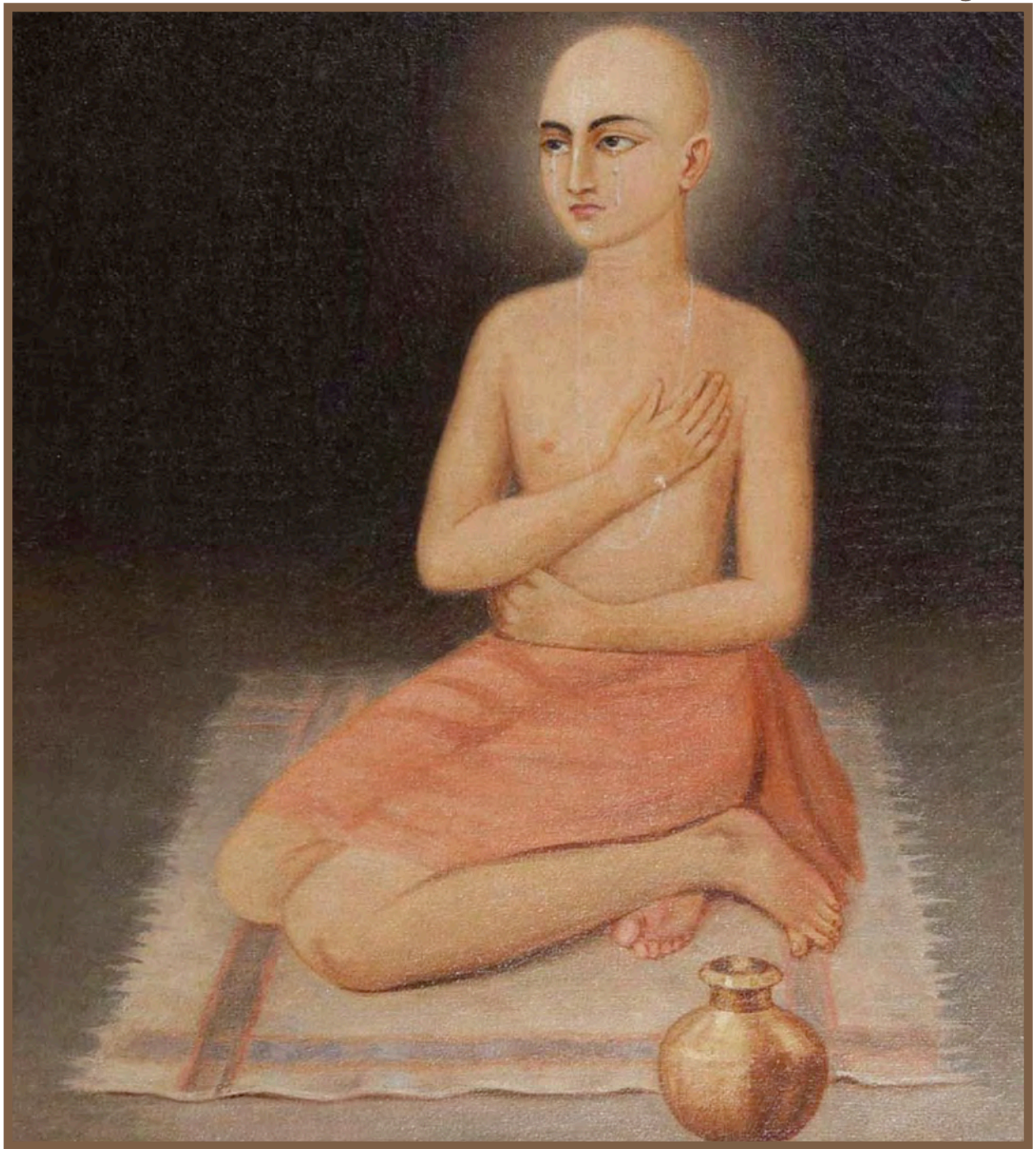
GAURA CAME AS A DEVOTEE

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came as a devotee ācārya in this age. Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami therefore describes him as bhakta-rūpa, Krishna in the form of a devotee (Cc. ādi. 1.14). Similarly, the followers of Thakur Bhaktivinoda cite the following verse accredited to Srila Jagadananda Pandit:

*sādhū pāoyā kaṣṭha baḍa jīvera jāniyā
sādhū-bhakta-rūpe kṛṣṇa āila nadiyā*

In Kali-yuga it is very difficult to find a genuine *sādhū*. Therefore, Krishna appeared as a *sādhū-guru*, taking birth in Nadia.

— Jagadananda Pandit. *Śrī Prema-vivarta*, 7.8. Sri Chaitanya Gaudiya Math. Calcutta. 1984. Bengali.



Unknown Bengali artist. Circa 1800s.

Mahaprabhu took sannyāsa to cry for himself, and thereby experience the mood of Radharani

WORSHIP OF GAURA AS A SANNYASI



Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Question: If one is attracted to Lord Chaitanya in his role as a *sannyāsī*, what does it mean?

Gour Govinda Swami: Are Bābā! Mahaprabhu as a *sannyāsī* — this is only external! Why did he take

sannyāsa? [He thought:] “Unless I take *sannyāsa*, they won’t accept my teachings.” If a *sannyāsī* says, they will accept. If a *grhastha* is saying, then they won’t accept. So, he thought, “I’ll take *sannyāsa*. I’ll put my feet on their head so they’ll be delivered.” They will think, “Oh, a *sannyāsī* is saying.” Therefore, he took *sannyāsa*. Yet, that is an external thing. Chaitanya remains Chaitanya, in the mood of Srimati Radharani — *rādhā-bhāva*.” 🍊

— From an evening darshan in Bhubaneswar. 5 November 1993.



Chaitanya Math in Cuttack

THE CHAITANYA MATH IN CUTTACK, ODISHA



Recently we went to Cuttack to research about Ramananda Raya for an upcoming book of his songs that our research institute, GORA¹, is working on translating into English². At that time we stumbled across a little-known treasure.

In approximately March of 1516³, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu returned to Odisha from his visit to Vrindavan. Maharaja Prataparudra, the then king of Odisha, received him in Cuttack at the place known as Gadagadia Ghat on the bank of the river Mahanadi. According to the local tradition, Prataparudra Maharaja arranged for a secluded place nearby where Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu stayed for three days.

Although not so well known, the place that Maharaja Prataparudra gave Mahaprabhu to stay is locally known by three names, the Chaitanya Math, the Pancha-tattva Math, and Mahaprabhu Badi. It is located near a busy market named Mohamadia Bazaar. After a little difficulty, we located the temple compound and found someone who could open the locked gate for us. The *pūjārī* arrived shortly thereafter and showed us the deities in the small temple

there of the Pancha-tattva and Jagannath Baladev Subhadra. Those deities along with the footprints of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu are said to have been established 500 years ago by Ramananda Raya. There is also a nearby well called Caitanya Mahāprabhunka Bāmphi, “The



Sign at the well where Mahaprabhu drank



Deities of the Pancha-tattva established by Ramananda Raya at the Chaitanya Math

Well of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu”, from which Mahaprabhu was drinking regularly during his visit there. Historically, the Chaitanya Math has also been a standard stopover for Bengali Gaudiya Vaishnavas traveling on their way to Jagannath Puri for *Ratha-yātrā*. It is one of the many *tīrthas* in the ancient devotional land of Odisha. 🍌

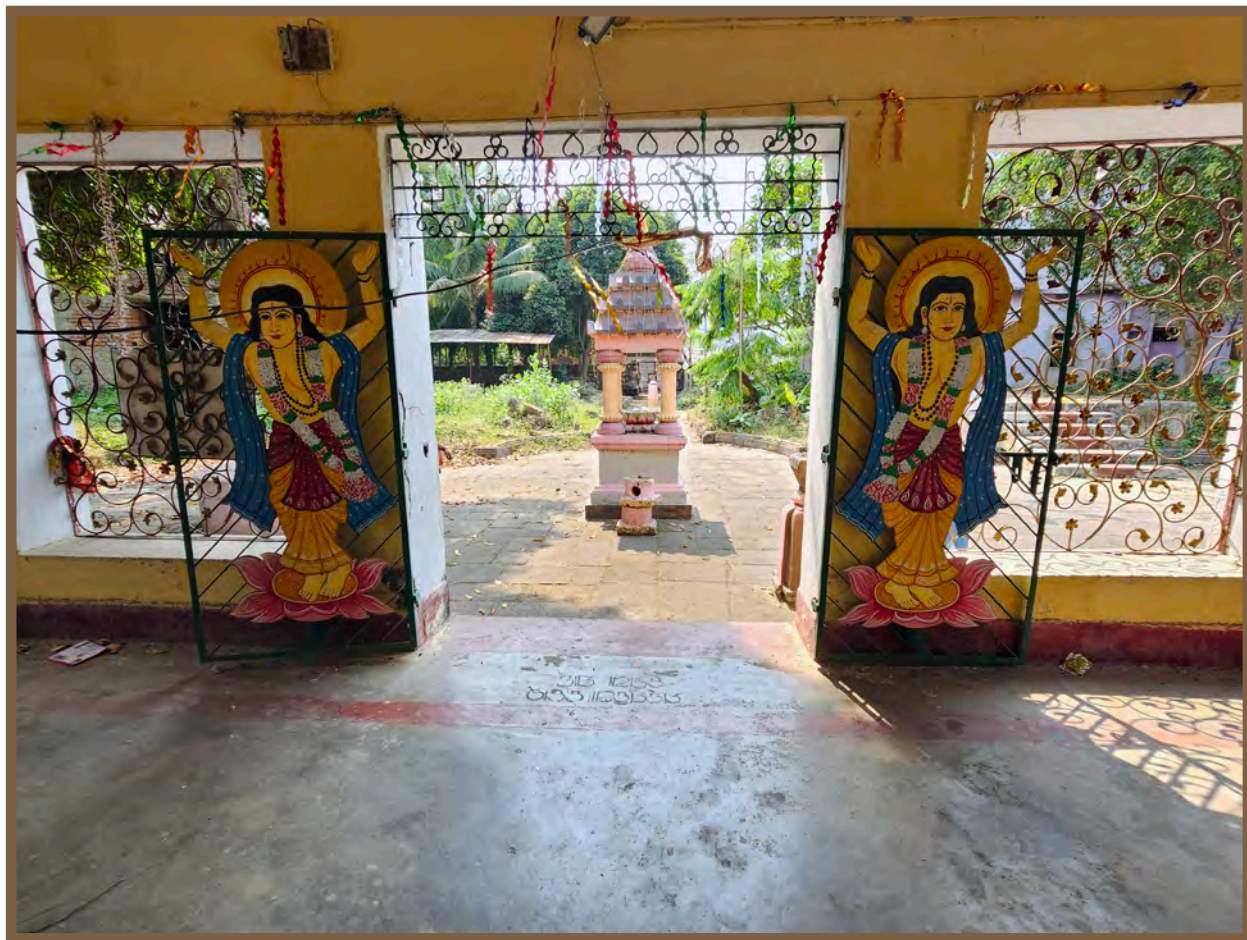
(Text and photos by Madhavananda Das)



Deity of Nityananda Prabhu



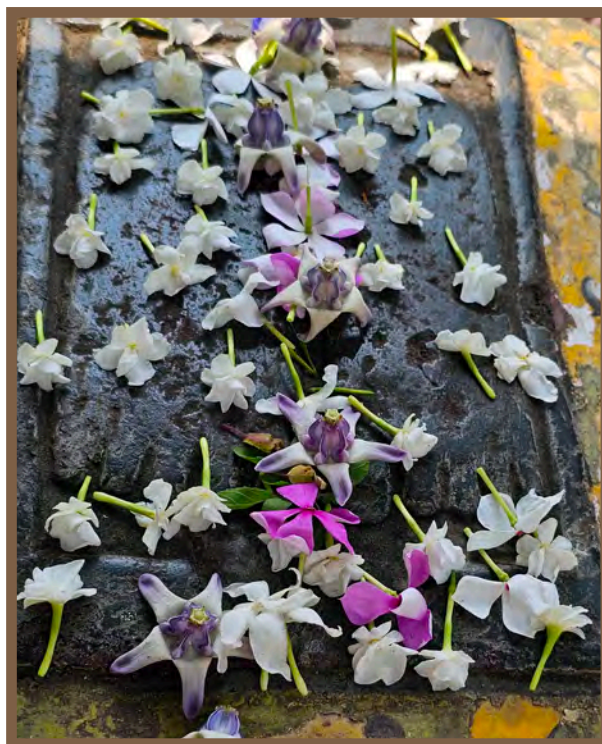
Deity of Mahaprabhu at the Chaitanya Math in Cuttack



View from the temple looking out at the shrine with Mahaprabhu's footprints



Deities of Jagannath Baladev Subhadra



Footprints of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu



According to local tradition, when staying in Cuttack, Ramananda Raya was regularly visiting the Saptaram Math, a thousand year old temple of Lakshmi Narayan Jiu close to the Chaitanya Math

Endnotes

¹ GORA stands for the Gaudiya Odia Research Association.

² Many years ago, the Odisha State Museum in Bhubaneswar collected several medieval palm leaf manuscripts of songs that were written by Ramananda Raya. They compiled them into an Odia book they published called, *Rāya Rāmānanda Padāvali*.

³ Based on the timeline compiled in 2019 by Professor Khonika Gope Kumar of Stanford University. <https://iskcondesiretree.com/profiles/blogs/constructing-an-approximate-time-line-of-mahaprabhu-s-life-events>

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Ancient deities of Lakshmi Narayan Jiu



The extraordinary and ancient deity of Garuda at the Saptaram Math in Cuttack

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